

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8700

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 2201

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT ZA

SUBJ: COMMENT ON CHARGES IN ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT

REF: LUSAKA 2161, LUSAKA 2150

1. SUMMARY: THE JUNE 15 SHAKE-UP IN THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT REMOVED GREY ZULU FROM A POSITION WITH DIRECT POWER, AND IN HIS PLACE PUT A MAN OF PROVEN LOYALTY TO KAUNDA. MAINZA CHONA IS LESS DOCTRINAIRE THAN ZULU AND ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE GENUINE POPULAR SUPPORT. PRIME MINISTER DANIEL LISULO WOULD SEEM TO BE A POLITICAL MODERATE AND A CAPABLE ADMINISTRATOR. THE OTHER CHANGES IN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT INDICATE NO DISCERNIBLE PATTERN, AND MAY BE INTENDED SOLELY TO SHOW THAT GOVERNMENT AND ITS LEADERS ARE ACTIVELY TRYING TO SOLVE ZAMBIA'S PROBLEMS AS THE TIME FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS APPROACHES. END SUMMARY.

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2. IN ANNOUNCING THE SWEEPING CHANGES IN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL JUNE 15, PRESIDENT KAUNDA SAID THAT THE BURDEN HE HAD BEEN CARRYING WAS TOO HEAVY FOR ONE MAN. HE TOLD THE NATIONAL COUNCIL THAT HE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING THE CHANGES FOR SIX MONTHS IN ORDER TO STREAMLINE GOVERNMENTAL ADMINISTRATION AND ALLOW HIM TO PLAY THE

ROLE OF OVERALL SUPERVISOR MORE EFFECTIVELY. IN LINE WITH THIS DESIRE, KAUNDA SAID HE WAS RELINQUISHING HIS DUTIES AS DEFENSE MINISTER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE CONTRAL COMMITTEE'S DEFENSE AND SECURITY SUB-COMMITTEE, TURNING OVER THESE RESPONSIBILITIES TO ERSTWHILE PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL GREY ZULU.

3. ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN NO HINT THAT A SHAKE-UP IN THE TOP LEVELS OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS IMMINENT, THERE HAS BEEN SPECULATION FOR SOME TIME THAT ZULU WOULD BE REPLACED AS NUMBER TWO IN THE ZAMBIAN POLITICAL HIERARCHY. DESPITE KAUNDA'S WORDS OF PRAISE WHEN ANNOUNCING THE MOVES, ZULU'S ADMINISTRATIVE PERFORMANCE AS SECRETARY GENERAL HAS BEEN SEEN BY MOST OBSERVERS AS POOR. FURTHERMORE, AN UNOFFICIAL SPOKESMAN FOR UNIP'S IDEOLOGICAL LEFT, ZULU HAS ALSO COME UNDER FIRE FROM MORE CONSERVATIVE ZAMBIAN POLITICAL AND BUSINESS CIRCLES. THE SHIFT TO THE DEFENSE AND SECURITY SLOT REMOVES HIM FROM A POSITION WITH DIRECT POWER TO ONE OF PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE BUT WITH MOST REAL POWER RESTING WITH KAUNDA.

4. MAINZA CHONA'S BOOST UP TO THE PARTY DIRECTOR GENERAL-SHIP IS A LOGICAL MOVE IN LINE WITH CHONA'S PAST POSITIONS AND APPARENT COMPLETE LOYALTY TO KAUNDA. HE IS NOW NUMBER TWO, AFTER KAUNDA, IN THE LINE OF SUCCESSION. WHILE SOME MAY DOUBT HIS ADMINISTRATIVE ABILITIES, HIS POLITICAL CREDENTIALS

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ARE SOLID, HE IS SEEN AS FAR LESS DOCTRINAIRE THAN ZULU, AND BY ALL ACCOUNTS HE IS SHARPER AND MORE INTELLIGENT THAN HIS PREDECESSOR. IN CONTRAST WITH ZULU, HE IS A GENUINELY POPULAR POLITICAL FIGURE. WHATEVER HIS ABILITIES, IT IS UNLIKELY HE WILL BE ABLE TO DO MUCH TO REJUVENATE UNIP'S FALLING FORTUNES IN THE SHORT TIME REMAINING BEFORE NATIONAL ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE. AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, FORM MAY BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN SUBSTANCE, WITH THE LEADERSHIP ARGUING THAT CHANGES ARE NEEDED IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS FROM NEW PERSPECTIVES.

5. THE APPOINTMENT OF DANIEL LISULO AS PRIME MINISTER FOR THE FIRST TIME PLACES A LOZI FROM WESTERN PROVINCE IN ONE OF THE TOP POSITIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT. LISULO HAS BEEN HOLDING AN IMPRESSIVE NUMBER OF POSITIONS WITHIN THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT, AND BY ALL ACCOUNTS IS CONSIDERED A HIGHLY CAPABLE LAWYER AND ADMINISTRATOR. HE HAS NOT GENERALLY BEEN REGARDED, HOWEVER, AS A "POLITICIAN," AND FOR THAT REASON THE APPOINTMENT CAME AS SOMEWHAT OF A SURPRISE. THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP HAS NOT BEEN A POSITION WITH GREAT SUBSTANCE BUT COULD BECOME SO. IF KAUNDA WAS SINCERE IN HIS EXPRESSED DESIRE TO HAVE SOME OF THE BURDEN TAKEN FROM HIS SHOULDERS,

MUCH OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN COULD BE PASSED ON TO LISULO. IN ADDITION, DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ALSO COMES UNDER THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF THE DECISION-MAKING COULD BE DONE AT THAT LEVEL RATHER THAN PASSING IT ON TO THE PRESIDENT AS HAS BEEN THE CASE.

6. THE DEMOTION OF ZULU AND THE PROMOTION OF MAINZA CHONA AND LISULO HAS THE NET EFFECT OF STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC PRAGMATIST ELEMENT OF ZAMBIA'S TOP LEADERSHIP. THIS SHOULD PROVE A NET PLUS IN ZAMBIA-U.S. RELATIONS. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE MISLEADING TO SURMISE THAT THE CHANGES WILL LEAD TO ANY DRAMATIC MOVEMENT AWAY FROM A HEAVY RELIANCE ON STATE INVOLVEMENT IN THE ECONOMY.

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7. A NUMBER OF THE CABINET CHANGES INVOLVED MINISTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN ZAMBIA'S ECONOMY: MINES, COMMERCE AND FOREIGN TRADE, POWER TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS. HOWEVER,

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUSAKA 2201

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

GIVEN THE PERSONALITIES INVOLVED, NO OBVIOUS CONCLUSIONS CAN BE DRAWN FROM THE CHANGES. GENERAL CHINKULI HAS BEEN MINISTER OF MINES FOR LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR. THE MINING INDUSTRY HAS DETERIORATED DURING THAT PERIOD BUT FEW BLAME THE SITUATION ON THE MINISTER. CHINKULI HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN FAIRLY HEAVY HANDED IN HIS DEALINGS WITH THE MINORITY SHAREHOLDERS (AMX AND ANGLO AMERICAN) IN THE MINES. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WAS MOVED FOR THIS REASON TO A LESS CONSPICUOUS POSITION IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS. NOTHING IN CHINKULI'S BACKGROUND (FORMER HEAD OF THE ARMY) INDICATES ANY SPECIAL EXPERTISE IN THE AREAS COVERED BY HIS NEW MINISTRY. IN ANY EVENT, THIS IS A DEMOTION FOR SOMEONE WHOSE LOYALTY TO KAUNDA HAS IN THE PAST COME UNDER QUESTION.

8. NONE OF THE OTHER MAJOR MOVES (AMES MAPOMA TO MINES, PAUL LUSAKA TO HELATH OR SYLVESTER TEMBO TO COMMERCE AND FOREIGN TRADE) HAVE OBVIOUS MOTIVES BEHIND THEM. PAUL LUSAKA'S
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CLAIM TO FAME IS TOTAL LOYALTY TO KAUNDA. NONE OF THE THREE HAS ANY PARTICULAR EXPERTISE TO QUALIFY THEM FOR THEIR MAJOR JOBS. TWO MINOR CHANGES, HOWEVER, SEEM CLEARLY AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE BUREAUCRACY. FORMER PERMANENT SECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE, FRANCIS WALUSIKU, HAS NEVER BEEN TERRIBLY IMPRESSIVE. HIS REPLACEMENT, LLOYD SICHILONGO, HAS HELD A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT POSITIONS (DEVELOPMENT PLANNING STAFF, NATIONAL IMPORT EXPORT CORPORATION, MEMBER OF BOARD OF NCCM AND RCM AND MOST RECENTLY UNDER SECRETARY FOR BUDGET IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE) AND IS EXTREMELY CAPABLE. THE MOVE SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE MINISTRY. ELEVATING JOSHUA LUMINA TO MINISTER STATUS PUTS THE HEAD OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ON A PAR WITH OTHER MINISTERS (HE WAS MINISTER OF STATE) AND COULD STRENGTHEN THE COMMISSION'S ROLE IN FORMULATING DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

9. AS FOR THE SHAKE-UP IN TOP RANKS OF THE POLICE, KAUNDA TOLD THE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE HOPED THE NEW TEAM COULD DEAL MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH ZAMBIA'S RISING CRIME PROBLEM. THE NEW POLICE INSPECTOR GENERAL, CRISPIN KATUKULA, WAS HEAD OF POLICE IN THE COPPERBELT, THE AREA WHICH HAS BEEN HIT HARDEST BY RECENT INCREASES IN THE CRIME RATE. THE POLICE HAVE ALSO BEEN REORGANIZED AT THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LEVEL, WITH RESPONSIBILITIES ALLOCATED FOR OPERATIONS, SPECIAL DUTIES, CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS, AND ADMINISTRATION. IT IS DEBATABLE WHETHER THIS ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING WILL BE ABLE TO DO MUCH ABOUT THE CRIME PROBLEM.

10. THERE IS NO APPARENT PATTERN TO THE OTHER CHANGES

ANNOUNCED BY KAUNDA. THE MINOR SHIFTING OF RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG MCC'S AND THE MUSICAL CHAIRS AMONG PROVINCIAL CABINET MINISTERS HAVE NOT RESULTED IN ANY DISCERNIBLY DIFFERENT ETHNIC, REGIONAL, OR IDEOLOGICAL LINE-UP. THE
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REASONS FOR THE CHANGES MAY LARGELY BE DUE TO A DESIRE TO DEMONSTRATE EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS WHICH ZAMBIA IS FACING AS NATIONAL ELECTIONS APPROACH. KAUNDA ALSO KNOWS THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE YET ANOTHER SHIFT FOLLOWING THOSE ELECTIONS, AND THE LESSER CHANGES, THEREFORE, MAY WELL HAVE NO LONG TERM SIGNIFICANCE. THERE IS BOUND TO BE SOME SPECULATION ABOUT THE FACT THAT NO FORMER UNITED PROGRESSIVE PARTY (UPP) MEMBERS WHO REJOINED UNIP IN THE PAST YEAR WERE BROUGHT INTO THE GOVERNMENT AS PART OF THE CHANGES. WHATEVER CHANCE THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN OF KAUNDA DOING SO WAS PROBABLY QUASHED FOLLOWING THE DISCIPLINING OF EX-UPP OFFICIAL AFRED CHAMBESHI (LUSAKA 2050), WHICH DEMONSTRATED THAT PROBLEMS STILL EXIST IN THE REINTEGRATION OF FORMER PARTY RENEGADES.
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